

PREFACE: CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF VITAL STATISTICS

This report represents 100 years of reporting Missouri vital statistics. Legislation passed by the Missouri General Assembly and approved on May 6, 1909, provided for the ‘immediate registration of all births and deaths’ by the State Board of Health. Improved sanitation and hygiene for the people of the state were anticipated as a result of centralizing these duties. With the passage of the legislation, Missouri became the 19th state to enact a comprehensive vital statistics law and acceptance into the death registration area of the U.S. Census Bureau soon followed. The 1909 law was implemented by February of 1910, and the first vital statistics report using a full year of Missouri birth and death records was for 1911.

Birth and death certificates are permanent legal records that contain valuable health and medical information. As legal documents, birth and death certificates provide proof of age, parentage, and citizenship. They are used to obtain passports and driver’s licenses, enroll in benefits programs, settle estates, obtain life insurance payouts, and terminate Social Security benefits. Health and medical information from birth and death records is transformed into data to calculate population growth, identify health risk factors, measure health outcomes, plan and evaluate health programs and conduct research. Vital statistics help drive public health programs that keep society healthy and they influence our personal healthcare. Vital records and vital statistics impact our lives every day. For more than 100 years, Missouri vital records have captured a piece of the life story of every person that was born or died in Missouri.

This report presents the final tabulation of statistical data relating to vital events in Missouri during 2011. Data for the year of the report were accepted through April 15, 2012, allowing information reflecting events in 2011 to be as complete as possible.

Missouri Vital Statistics 2011 is published for use in public health and related fields as an aid for studying births, deaths, fetal deaths, marriages, dissolutions, and abortions. This document along with additional vital statistics data are available on the Department of Health and Senior Services website at health.mo.gov under Data, Surveillance Systems, and Statistical Reports.

For complete printer friendly version: 57.7 MB Color Cover
<http://health.mo.gov/data/vitalstatistics/mvs11/2011MissouriVitalStatistics.pdf>

For complete printer friendly version: 5.66 MB Grayscale Cover
<http://health.mo.gov/data/vitalstatistics/mvs11/2011MissouriVitalStatistics2.pdf>

Vital Statistics Then and Now

Changes that occur over time can be very significant but difficult to see. A benefit to having one hundred years of vital statistics is the ability to document some important changes in the public health of Missourians as shown below.

- People are now expected to live nearly 25 years longer than in 1911. Back then, average life expectancy was 53 years, while today it is over 77 years.
- More than 99 percent of all babies born in Missouri today will live to celebrate their first birthday. In 1911, ten out of every 100 babies died before they were one year old.
- Missourians are much more likely to survive childhood today than in 1911. Back then, 18 of every 100 young people died before age 20. Today, close to 99 percent of Missouri children will celebrate their 20th birthday.
- Missourians are nearly twice as likely now to live to age 65, compared to people living in 1911. Back then, only 46 out of 100 Missourians survived to age 65. Now, 82 percent live to that age.
- In 1911, about 22 percent of deaths in Missouri were caused by communicable diseases like influenza, scarlet fever, tuberculosis and whooping cough (pertussis). Today, less than three percent of Missouri deaths are caused by communicable disease.
- Women are much less likely to die as a consequence of pregnancy and child birth now than they were in 1911. The maternal death rate now (2011) is two deaths per 10,000 live births, compared to more than 77 deaths in 1911.

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